



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 July 2023

by Benjamin Clarke BA (Hons.) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26 July 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/P0240/D/23/3315802

Fairfield Cottage, Fairfield Road, Biggleswade SG18 0AA

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Edwards against the decision of Central Bedfordshire Council.
 - The application Ref CB/22/03414/FULL, dated 23 August 2022, was refused by notice dated 8 December 2022.
 - The development proposed is a new garage and store to replace a range of existing outbuildings and garages.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and, planning permission is granted for a new garage and store to replace a range of existing outbuildings and garages at Fairfield Cottage, Fairfield Road, Biggleswade SG18 0AA in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref CB/22/03414/FULL, dated 23 August 2022, subject to the attached schedule of conditions.

Main Issue

2. The main issue relevant to this appeal is the effect of the development upon the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site consists of a detached dwelling, surrounded by more open land. the appeal site also features several outbuildings, which are constructed to varying designs, proportions, and materials. The boundaries of the appeal site are marked by several mature trees, in addition to planting and some fences.
4. The appeal proposal seeks permission to remove several existing outbuildings and to replace it with a single structure. Whilst the proposed building represents a relatively large structure and that the footprint would be comparable to the existing dwelling, the proposed development would have a height lower than the dwelling.
5. These factors, when combined with the relatively low eaves height of the proposed outbuilding, would ensure that, despite the footprint of the proposed development, it would appear ancillary to the main dwelling. In consequence, the proposed development would not dominate the dwelling.
6. Furthermore, the appeal site is relatively large in area. the proposed outbuilding would occupy a proportionately small section of the appeal site. Therefore, for these reasons the proposed building would appear to be a subordinate addition. In addition, the proposed development would, by reason of its layout, fenestration, and door patterns, would also have the appearance

of a domestic outbuilding used for storage. This appearance would not be incongruous.

7. In addition, the proposed development would be near to the garden area of the appellant's dwelling, in addition to parking and manoeuvring areas. This would reinforce the link between the retained and proposed buildings and prevent it from being discordant.
8. In reaching this view, I have also had regard to the fact that the proposed development would replace existing outbuildings. These collectively have a footprint similar to the proposed development. Therefore, if I were minded to dismiss the appeal, there is a likelihood that these buildings would be retained. In consequence, the proposed development would not result in an erosion of the site's character.
9. The proposed building would also be constructed from a palette of materials that is of a traditional nature. This would ensure that the proposed development would harmonise to a degree with the more rural surroundings of the wider area. It is also possible to impose conditions requiring that the development be constructed from these materials.
10. The proposed development is set back from the public highway by a significantly large amount. This reduces the prominence of the development and means that the development would not be visually intrusive. Furthermore, the mature trees and planting that surround the appeal site would provide additional screening. For these reasons, the proposed development would not be a prominent addition to the local area.
11. Although the appeal site is not located within a settlement, it is near to Biggleswade. From the appeal site, there are some glimpsed views of different buildings and other structures, such as a telecommunications mast. In addition, there are some views from the appeal site of buildings located near to the A1 road.
12. These views, in unison, mean that the surroundings of the appeal site are somewhat developed in nature. Therefore, the erection of a building on the appeal site, which would be constructed to a traditional design, would not result in an erosion of the area's character.
13. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would not have an adverse effect upon the character and appearance of the surrounding area. The development, in this regard, would conform with the requirements of Policy HQ of the Central Bedfordshire Local Plan (2021) and the Central Bedfordshire Design Guide (2014). Amongst other matters, these seek to ensure that new developments are of the highest possible quality; do not dominate the house; and are not intrusive in the street scene.

Conditions

14. In addition to the standard implementation condition, a condition specifying the approved plans is necessary to define the approved development. In order to maintain the character of the surrounding area, a condition is necessary to enable the Council to approve the materials from which the building is constructed.

15. Given the nature of the surrounding area, conditions regarding drainage and ecology are also necessary to ensure that these matters are not impinged by the proposed development. Given the early stage of the development that these matters may need to be undertaken, some of these conditions need to be agreed prior to the commencement of development.

Conclusion

16. For the preceding reasons, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed, and planning permission granted, subject to conditions.

Benjamin Clarke

INSPECTOR

Schedule of Conditions

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: P01; P02 A; P03; and P04 A
- 3) Prior to any above ground works, full details of the materials to be used in the construction of the development hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
- 4) All ecological measures and/or works shall be carried out in accordance with the details contained in the Ecological Appraisal (Samsara Ecology, 2022) as submitted with the planning application.
- 5) Prior to the commencement of development, Preliminary Roost Assessment shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Preliminary Roost Assessment shall ascertain if the buildings have bat interest and if so, the level of use and whether any mitigation should be provided, including timescales for implementation. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and shall be retained thereafter.
- 6) Prior to the commencement of development, full details of the storm water design and construction need to be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details, be fully implemented prior to the development being first used and shall be retained thereafter.